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Bet You Missed It -- Press Clippings -- In The News -- Carefully Selected by Your Crack Team of News Sleuths

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Bet You Missed It

Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths

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Column Editor's Note: Hey, are you reading this? Your esteemed column editor would like to know what you think! Zip off a quick email to <pmrose@buffalo.edu>. Does BYMI fill your needs? Do you have any suggestions for changes? I'm listening! — **PR**

CULTURAL OR SPIRITUAL?

by **Pamela M. Rose** (University at Buffalo)

The definition of the word "Anasazi" — used for almost a century by archaeologists to denote ancient pueblo dwellers — is considered derogatory for some Pueblo Indians, who prefer the term "ancient Puebloans." Some national parks are being accused of censorship in their attempt to be sensitive to the Indians by declining to carry books using the word. In another case the term "rock art" is said to suggest European cultural activity rather than spiritual undertaking, so New Mexico's **Petroglyph National Monument** bookstore won't stock **Rock Art** in New Mexico by **Polly Schaafsma**, which also shows sacred images tribes believe should not be photographed.

See — "Sensitivity or Censorship?" in Random Samples section edited by **Constance Holden**, *Science*, Feb. 25, 2005, p.1197.

MONKS, FIRE, WAR, THEFT, AND NEGLECT

by **Pamela M. Rose** (University at Buffalo)

Just how likely were individual handwritten books to survive the Middle Ages, or entire works to be lost? How much of science has really been copied down through the generations, and of the survivors, how much might have been lost in translation? Using the **Verhulst-Pearl** logistic equation for population growth and making assumptions that texts were copied on demand rather than mass printed as they were after the invention of the printing press, **John Cisne** takes a unique and stimulating approach to calculating the percentages of texts that have survived or gone extinct, and thus the amount of knowledge that we have inherited.

See — "How Science Survived" — Medieval Manuscripts as Fossils" by **Sharon Larimer Gilman** and **Florence Eliza Glaze**, *Science*, Feb. 25, 2005, pp. 1208-1209, and the full article, "How Science Survived: Medieval Manuscripts' 'Demography' and Classic Texts' Extinction" by **John L. Cisne**, *Science*, Feb. 25, 2005, pp. 1305-1307.

Issues in Vendor/Library Relations from page 85

vendor looks ready for the next **World's Fair**. Nobody makes them outfit their staff in boater hats and flashy suits as if they're staging a vaudeville revival. Nobody encouraged them to hand a microphone to a rented **Elvis** impersonator. Some companies, it seems, think of ways to give attendees good reason to think twice about visiting the exhibit hall.

Remember that trade show/professional meeting question? All those librarians who skip the exhibits think that **ALA** is a professional meeting. Vendors can argue about that and maybe there are some answers in no-conflict scheduling, exhibit-floor *hor d'oeuvres*, and in other schemes. But maybe vendors could get the message, too. **ALA** is a professional meeting. Nobody told the vendors they weren't allowed to leave the

cans, nobody forces anyone to fill exhibit space with structures so elaborate the ven-

exhibit floor. Nobody's turning away vendor badges from all those meeting rooms and auditoriums. Vendors might find that getting involved in that side of the conference is the best use they can make of their time at **ALA**. They might find there aren't many better ways of learning what's important to librarians than to attend their meetings and programs, and to join their committees and groups. They might find that when librarians think of your staff as members of the library community, you just can't buy better marketing than that. When's the last time you wrote up a big sale in the booth anyway? Come to think of it, did you ever?

Calvin Coolidge once attended a state fair and was asked beforehand if he planned to give a speech. "No," the laconic president answered, "I am going as an exhibit."

Coolidge had a better sense of humor than he's usually given credit for. But do all library vendors get the joke? 🐾

DOCTORAL DELAY

by **Pamela M. Rose** (University at Buffalo)

The last assessments of U.S. doctoral programs by the **National Research Council** were published in 1995 and 1982, however the next survey may not meet even its delayed projected publication date of 2008 due to lack of funding support from the federal government. Measurement of graduate education is important at a time when many schools are facing competition from other nations for the world's best students, and ceding ground to commercial rankings by *U.S. News and World Report*. The suggestions that universities help pay for the survey has been met with opposition, and to exploring other ways to assess graduate education quality through mining existing databases.

See — "Funding Woes Delay Survey of U.S. Graduate Programs" by **Jeffrey Mervis**, *Science*, Jan. 7, 2005, p. 29.



HEY, LARRY SUMMERS! READ THIS!

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

In a world of PIN numbers gone mad, we're reeling from the memory challenge of random but essential information. And a gender gap may be developing with major sociological implications. Women are mostly "bilateral" using both sides of their brain equally while men are skewed to either the verbal or scientific lobes. Will the requirement of strictly numerical or mixed passwords create an economic gender gap? And will this have to be studied and debated *ad nauseam* in the ivory towers?

See — **Matthew Kaminski**, "MK7364565," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 10, 2005, p. A16.

BILLIONAIRE TID-BITS

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

Martha Stewart is out of the slammer and worth \$1 billion. **J.K. Rowling** is now in billionaire status with her cut of \$3 billion in sales of **Harry Potter** stuff. Of the **Forbes** list, 18 billionaires are high school drop-outs. **Lev Leviev**, Israeli billionaire is trained to do a *bris*, the Jewish circumcision ritual. And of course we have to note that mere tycoon/celebrity **Paris Hilton** is "dating" Greek billionaire **Paris Latsis** in a **Paris & Paris** hook-up.

See — "By the Numbers," *Forbes*, Billionaires Special Issue, March 2005, p.184.

OMNIGOOGLISATION. PRONOUNCE IN FRENCH.

by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Google is about to offer access to 15 million books in five prestigious libraries, and Chirac is in a flap and calling for culture summits. France's chief librarian **Jean Jeanneney** and Culture Minister **Renaud de Vabres** have alerted him to "omnigooglisation" and "crushing American domination in the definition of how future generations conceive the world."

Jeanneney fears *The Scarlet Pimpernel* will become the definitive text on the French revolution (I'm not making this up) and vows to counter-attack. But France's **Gallica** project has a budget less than one thousandth of the 200 mil Google is about to spend.

France already has a mare's nest of laws protecting its culture industries. And here's the great quote: "Only a few voices are ever raised to argue that protectionism can lead to introverted mediocrity."

See — "Chirac Plans French Anti-American 'Counter-offensive' on Internet Culture," **Agence France Press**, March 20, 2005.

AND IF YOU TRULY DON'T HAVE A LIFE

by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Can't settle on a hobby? Do people flee the room when you enter? You can stamp a dollar bill with *Wheresgeorge.com* and other shlubs will post the serial number and where the dollar is now. There are 2.3 million other lonely goofs out there like you who view the Website creator **Hank Eskin** as akin to a "god." He has ridden this wave of approval and expanded his empire to include *whereswilly.com* for those boring Canadians, *doshtracker.co.uk* for the British who find tramping too arduous and *osatsu.net* for Japanese too slack for suicide.

And there's potential for social life! "Georgers" hold gatherings and compare zip code lists for where their bills have hit. The rivalry is intense, friendships are spawned and the wild fun has proven a foundation for three marriages.

See — "By the Numbers," **Forbes**, Billionaires Special Issue, March 2005, p.64.

Leaving the Books Behind! — Research and Recycling

by **Mary E. (Tinker) Massey**, Column Editor (University of South Carolina, School of Library and Information Science, Columbia, SC) <MMassey@gwm.sc.edu>

I have just published an article in *Associates* called "The best dressed book in Academe." <http://associates.ucr.edu/> (March issue). In that article, I touch on the history of book art and book/dust jackets and the usage of them in libraries today. I am completing a year-long study of **USC Libraries'** first jacketed books in the regular stacks and how the jackets affect circulation statistics. Believe it or not, in our academic library, non-jacketed books transferred from Browsing to the general stacks showed an increase of 15% in circulation, while the jacketed books showed an increase of 54% in usage. The administration was concerned about the changes in workflow that left the jackets on the books. Would things change in the stacks, would jackets harm the books in some way or take up too much room? Their worries were dispelled by the great amounts of time, money and personnel the changes saved in the processing. Now their anxieties are smoothed by the realization that jackets actually increase circulation statistics.

All of this work and wonder got me thinking about serials. In Public Libraries, the covers of journals are competitively creating realms of art, a graphic nightmare for some! We are constantly assaulted by color and movement, design and elegance, graphic renderings of words and meanings. Patrons have no problem in identifying their journal of choice. The size, shape and graphic representations tell everything. In academe, we not only have those popularized journals, but we have the scholastic journals as well. Even without pictures, I can readily spot journals I cataloged or have dealt with over the thirty years in libraries. The coordination of color constancy, word placement, font size, issue size and shape, and spine printing give me visual recognition of an old friend. Since scho-

lastic journals' vendors and publishers feel a need to constantly increase cost for the titles we purchase, I recommend to them that they find some graphics to add to the boring words they display. Journal of Toxicology might want to add pictures of people drinking poisoned water, or birds dropping from air pollution, or the ozone holes. Circulation journals might display people using both people check-outs and self-check systems. Rare and Special Collections magazines might want to have facsimiles or mock-ups of old materials or realia on the covers. Astronomy magazines sometimes have solar system events on their covers, but some have nothing. Journals should tell us on the covers what we are likely to find inside. It's not good enough anymore to have just words. We need visuals — graphics! We could get more patrons to look into those magazines if we had graphics. If book jackets work for books, why not cover graphics for magazines?

Well, to be very honest, I have seen some holographic representations on journal covers. They were interesting and fun. Not only can I read the computer magazine, I can spend hours playing with the holograph! When I was young, *McCall's* magazine had **Betsy McCall**, the paper doll at the end of the journal. You were actually invited to clip it out and add to her wardrobe with each issue. Now that meant we were adding usage to the issue by recycling it to other people in the family. Our only problem was being patient enough to wait on the adults to finish the magazine. We have become so specific with our journals that only a narrow focus of people can make use of the issue. I think we could expand usage by adding the graphics.

On another aspect of our collections, newspapers, I just want to add that we can recycle



them very well in our culture. We have blue recycling bins, true, but I am talking of more practical means of recycling. Newsprint has some very good qualities. It is super absorbent, insulating, and a gardening help. As a gardening aid, newspapers can be used as a mulching device buried under dirt and leaves. It also reduces weeds and holds moisture for growing roots. Seems the poor weedy growths don't like the ink and other chemicals in the paper. I have a number of coworkers who use the newspapers in this manner. They are insulating! I used to cook my husband his evening meal, wrap it in newspaper very tightly and transport sixty miles to his workplace as a piping hot meal to maintain his strict nutritional schedule. Our street people stuff their shirts and coats with the newspaper on cold nights. On another side of insulation, I find that the tile floors in the back of my duplex can be covered with newspaper and maintain some bit of warmth in the rooms for winter. It can also seal cracks and drafts. Of course, I do have an elderly dog who cannot endure the twelve hour days I have and that's where their absorbency comes in. The most remarkable newspaper title is the *Wall Street Journal*. Not only does it rate number one for all of these qualities and recycling abilities. Every section in the paper is of nearly equal size/pagings and opens easily to the center of the section. The paper itself is also larger than others and covers a bigger area on the floor and the grade of paper is as it has always been — heavier and more absorbent than all of the others. BTW, if you have a leak in your library, the *WSJ* comes in handy for soaking up those puddles. The disposal is super easy!

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